

Nootkan Band Names

John Thomas, Waławayaqu's
University of Victoria

Vancouver Island's west coast and the adjacent tip of Washington's Olympic Peninsula is the homeland of the Nootkan speaking people. Many different bands occupy parts of the coast line and inlets from Cape Cook to Cape Flattery. Each band is named for a characteristic trait of the people or a distinctive feature of their location.

The most complete list of these names occurs in the 'Second general report on the Native people of British Columbia,' by Franz Boas (1891). In compiling this list Boas drew on older sources, such as Sproat (1868). Twenty three names are listed, written in a linguistic orthography. One of these is an unidentified name listed in parentheses. Geographic locations are given and a few names are translated.

Band Names From Boas

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|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Tli'asath=outside people . . . | Cape Flattery. |
| 2. Patciná'ath | San Juan Harbour. |
| 3. Ni'tinath | Nitinat Sound. |
| 4. Hú'á'ath | } Barclay Sound. |
| 5. Híntcu'k'tli'á'ath | |
| 6. Eki'á'ath=banes on hill people | |
| 7. Híatá'ath | |
| 8. Tí'á'á'ath | |
| 9. Tók'á'á'ath | } Northern entrance
Barclay Sound. |
| 10. Hópeta'á'ath | |
| 11. Yutli'á'ath | Northern entrance
Barclay Sound. |

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|--|--------------------------|
| 12. Tli'á'kwíath | } Clayoquot Sound. |
| 13. K'eltsmá'ath=rhubarb people | |
| 14. A'hánsath | |
| 15. Mí'á'á'ath = houses on spit
people | } Nootka Sound. |
| 16. Hé'ekwíath | |
| 17. Mí'á'atath | |
| 18. Mí'telath | |
| 19. Nuteá'tlath | } North of Nootka Sound. |
| 20. E'hátsath | |
| 21. Kayá'kath | |
| 22. To'á'k'tlisath=large cat in bay
people.
(Tlahosath). | |

Since the time of Boas the west coast band names have occurred in print many times (in various spellings), but the words have never been fully broken down into their constituent morphemes, or even accurately translated. It is my purpose here to attempt further analysis of these names.

The order of my presentation follows that of the Boas list. A typical English rendering (if available) and a translation of each word is given first. The Band names are then given in both Nitinaht (my first language) and Nootka (my second language). Where possible I have undertaken a morphological analysis of the words. For readers unfamiliar with the geographic area of the Nootkan people, a map from Philip Drucker's The Northern and Central Nootkan Tribes (1951) has been included. This map locates seventeen of the bands mentioned in Boas. All are written

Names

1. _____ people of the coast.
 Nootka $\acute{\lambda}a\text{'}\acute{\lambda}as\text{'}\acute{a}th\text{'}$.
 $\acute{\lambda}a\text{'}\acute{\lambda}as$. coastline location.
 $\text{'}\acute{a}th\text{'}$. people of.
 Nitinaht $\acute{\lambda}a\text{'}\acute{a}\text{'}\acute{y}a\text{'}\acute{t}\acute{x}\text{'}$.
 $\acute{\lambda}a\text{'}\acute{a}\text{'}\acute{y}$. coastline location.
 $\text{'}\acute{a}\text{'}\acute{t}\acute{x}\text{'}$. people of.
- These people are also known as the Makah (see Drucker map). $\acute{\lambda}a\text{'}\acute{\lambda}as\text{'}\acute{a}th\text{'}$ is a Nootka word meaning people of outside coastal locations. It is possible that this term refers to Tatoosh Island. The village there was used by whale and seal hunters from different places as a camp or shelter during stormy weather. Permanent residents were called $\acute{\lambda}a\text{'}\acute{\lambda}as\text{'}\acute{a}th\text{'}$.

2. Pachenat. people of the foam.
 Nootka $\acute{p}a\text{'}\acute{c}\acute{i}\text{'}\acute{n}a\text{'}\acute{a}th\text{'}$.
 Nitinaht $\acute{p}a\text{'}\acute{c}\acute{i}\text{'}\acute{d}\text{'}\acute{a}\text{'}\acute{t}\acute{x}\text{'}$.
 $\acute{p}acabs$. sea foam, suds.
 $\text{'}\acute{i}\text{'}\acute{d}\text{'}\acute{a}$. on the rocks.
 $\text{'}\acute{a}\text{'}\acute{t}\acute{x}\text{'}$. people of.
- Drucker subsumes this term under the name Nitinat.

3. Nitinant. people of $di\text{'}\acute{t}i\text{'}\acute{d}\text{'}\acute{a}$.
 Nootka $ni\text{'}\acute{t}i\text{'}\acute{n}a\text{'}\acute{a}th\text{'}$.
 Nitinant $di\text{'}\acute{t}i\text{'}\acute{d}\text{'}\acute{a}\text{'}\acute{t}\acute{x}\text{'}$.
 $di\text{'}\acute{t}i\text{'}\acute{d}\text{'}\acute{a}$ is known today as Jordan River, located S.E. of San Juan Harbor (also: Port San Juan, Port Renfrew).
4. Ohiat. people who always came back.
 Nootka $hu\text{'}\acute{e}\text{'}\acute{a}th\text{'}$.
 $hu\text{'}\acute{i}n$. came back.
 $\text{'}\acute{e}\text{'}$. always.
 $\text{'}\acute{a}th\text{'}$. people of.
 Nitinaht $hu\text{'}\acute{y}a\text{'}\acute{t}\acute{x}\text{'}$.
5. Uchucklesit. people who live way in there on
 on the beach (head of the bay
 or harbor).
 Nootka $hu\text{'}\acute{c}uq\acute{\lambda}is\text{'}\acute{a}th\text{'}$.
 hu . way over there (far).
 $\text{'}\acute{c}u$. being at.
 $\text{'}\acute{q}\acute{\lambda}$. inside.
 $\text{'}\acute{i}s$. beach.
 $\text{'}\acute{a}th\text{'}$. people of.
 Nitinaht $\acute{x}u\text{'}\acute{c}uq\acute{\lambda}isa\text{'}\acute{t}\acute{x}\text{'}$.

6. _____ people of the place where bushes
hang down.
Nootka hiku'í?ath.
hiku'í. bushes hanging from face
of rock. hair hanging over brow.
-?ath. people of.
Nitinaht hiku'ía?tǎ.
This term does not appear in Drucker.

7. _____
Knowledge of this band is now lost. No
identification is possible. The term does
not appear in Drucker.

8. Tsishaat people who are proud of their
community.
Nootka čiša'ath.
Nitinaht čiša?tǎ.
čičis. proud.
-a?tǎ. people who are ____.
This term describes a people who are proud
of their prosperous, clean community.

9. Toquat. people of the narrow, rocky beach.
Nootka tuk'á'ath.
tuk'. narrow.

- ?a'. rocky.
-?ath. people of.
Nitinaht tuk'á'tǎ.
10. Hopachisat.
Nootka hu'picis'ath.
hu'pkimí. round object.
-icis. on edge of bank of river.
-?ath. people of.
Nitinaht hu'picisa?tǎ.
11. Ucluelet. people of the sheltered bay.
Nootka yu'íu'uí'ath.
yu'í. sheltered bay.
-u'uí. place of.
-?ath. people of.
Nitinaht yu'í?uáa?tǎ.
yu'í. a way to shore through
rough sea.
-?u'uí. place of.
-a?tǎ. people of.
12. Clayoquat.
Nootka áa?u'k'e'ath.
áa?u'. another, again.
áa?u'k'íá. changed to
different form repeatedly.

- ʔath. people of.
Nitinaht ʔaʔuk^vaʔatš.
13. _____ people of the rhubarb-like plant.
Nootka qič¹maʔath.
qič. rhubarb-like plant which was
peeled and eaten (heracleum
lanatum).
-čmaʔa. many on the rocks.
-th. people of.
Nitinaht qičibʔaʔtš.
Does not appear in Drucker.
14. Ahousat. people of hospitality.
Nootka ʔahu^sʔath.
Nitinaht ʔa^hu^saʔtš.
15. _____ people of houses in a row.
Nootka ma^{nu}sʔath.
maʔas. house.
-nu^s. in a row.
-ʔath. people of.
Nitinaht ba^{du}wsaʔtš.
baʔas. house.
-du^{ws}. in a row.
-aʔtš. people of.

Drucker mentions this group (p. 6) and reports that they were exterminated by the Ahousats. Actually, they were assimilated.

16. Hesquiat. people of unity.
Nootka hiš^keʔath.
hišuk^vink. united people, people
of unity.
-ʔath. people of.
Nitinaht. hiš^ke^ʔtš.
The Nitinaht term for united people would be
ča^{widuk}q^va^{ksa}ʔtš.
čawa^{ʔk}. one.
-iduk^v. together.
-qaš. mind, thought.
-sa^{ʔtš}. people.
17. Moachat. people of the deer.
Nootka mowač^{ath}.
muwač. deer.
-ʔath. people of.
Nitinaht buwač^{tš}.
buwač. deer.
-tš. people of.
18. Muchalat. people of maʔas.
Nootka mač^{ia}ʔath.

maʔas. tribe.

-ʔath. people of.

Nitinaht mačiaʔtš.

baʔas. house.

-aʔtš. people of.

maʔas or baʔas is also a name given to a group of people knowledgeable in the culture and history of the potlatch (songs, dances, and masks).

19. Nuchatlet people of the mountain.

Nootka nuča·iʔath

nuči·. mountain.

-a·i. affixed to, attached to.

-ʔath. people of.

Nitinaht duča·iaʔtš.

dučiʔ. mountain.

-a·i. affixed to, attached to.

-aʔtš. people of.

20. Ehetisat people of the big beach area.

Nootka ʔi·hatisʔath.

ʔi·h. big.

-atis. beach area, along beach.

-ʔath. people of.

Nitinaht ʔi·šʷatisaʔtš.

ʔi·šʷ. big.

-atis. around the beach area.

-aʔtš. people of.

21. Kyuquot people of the needle sharp bush area.

Nootka qa·ʔyukʷath.

qačak. needle.

-yukʷ. bush area.

-ʔath. people of.

Nitinaht qaʔyu·kʷtš.

22. Chickliset. people of the cut in the beach.

Nootka či·qəisʔath.

či·. cut.

-qə. into, inside.

-is. beach.

-ʔath. people of.

Nitinaht či·qəisaʔtš.

či·. cut.

-qəis. into beach.

-aʔtš. people of.

23. (Tlahosath)

Possible Translation

Nootka ʔa·hʷsʔath

ʔaʔis. post or tree on the beach.

-hʷs. in front of beach area.

-?ath. people of.

This term was unanalysed on the Boas list. It
does not appear in Drucker.

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References

Boas, Franz. 1891. Second general report on the Indians of British Columbia. In the Report of the 60th meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, Leeds, 1890. London.

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